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ABSTRACT

The flow of international news was traced from the Associated Press (AP) interbureau and United Press International (UPI) state wires into 11 Indiana newspapers to determine (1) the comparative frequency of wire service news about nations of the more developed northern hemisphere and those of the less developed southern hemisphere, and (2) whether the two blocs of nations were treated differently in subject matter and news themes. Samples from 2 constructed weeks and 2 random weeks of wire news were taken from the morning cycles of both news services, from the computer of the "Indiana Daily Student," and from AP dispatches from sub-Saharan Africa. A random sample of 11 Indiana daily newspapers, divided almost equally between services, was searched for all foreign wire service stories, with coders noting location, length, and extent of editing for each story. The results indicated that the number of wire stories about northern and southern nations was about equal, with no difference in story length. The bulk of wire service coverage was about diplomatic or political relations, internal and armed conflict, political crime, terrorism, and items of human interest. About 60% of all foreign wire stories reported some form of conflict, with Third World nations twice as likely to be portrayed in such stories. The sub-Sahara African dispatches contained a mixture of news on development and conflict, but final usage by the newspapers produced a narrower, more violent portrait of the area. (HTH)

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Foreign News Coverage in Two U.S. Wire Services: Study Number 2 -- 1981

by

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Presented to the International Communication Division , Association for Education in Journalism, annual convention, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, July 1982. Dr. Wilhoit is professor of journalism and associate director of the Bureau of Media Research at Indiana University, where Dr. Weaver is associate professor and director of the bureau. The authors appreciate the assistance of Sharon Bramlett, Olatunji Dare, Mary Alice Sentman, Pegie Stark, Clint Swift, Patrick Washburn, and Linda Zaradich in gathering the data. Others who were extremely helpful in analyzing the data were Judith Buddenbaum, Frederick Fico, and Mathias Mogekwu.

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Coups and earthquakes do not make up the bulk of foreign news in the American press, in spite of the common view. A popular book -- Coups and Earthquakes -- by a U.S. foreign correspondent and the arguments of a host of Third World critics are wide of the mark. Most international news is about politics and the diplomatic and military activities that underpin politics among states.

Heavy threads of conflict, however, do dominate international news. Whether armed or non-violent, it is the energy of conflict that drives world news. The closer to home the altercation, the more likely it is to be news in almost any part of the world.

These are some of the major impressions from the second of our studies of the Associated Press and United Press International services used by a majority of small- to medium-sized media in the United States (18). Our second study consists of several stages: (1) analysis of a sample of AP and UPI regional wires to small- and medium-sized mass media in the U.S.; (2) a comparison of a sample of sub-Saharan Africa dispatches filed on the national AP trunk wire with Africa news moved on the AP regional wire; and (3) analysis of the use of foreign wire news in a sample of 11 small newspapers in Indiana.

Background of the Problem: A New World Information Order

Debate about a new world information order during the last decade has heightened awareness, among professional journalists and researchers alike, of the critical role of world news flow in international politics. The initial charges of western cultural imperialism have given way to more detailed

analyses of world news flow as a complicated mix of geopolitical, economic, and professional journalistic variables.

Robert Desmond has shown that the international press corps -- a sizable group of journalists who report foreign events fulltime -- dates only to about 1917 and the coverage of the Paris Peace Conference after World War I (3). That event, covered by hundreds of journalists, also marks the beginning of intense criticism of international reporting. Walter Lippmann's concern about the reporting of rumor and second-hand information from the peace conference led, in part, to his two classics on the press, Liberty and the News (6) in which he called for better educated and more professional journalists, and Public Opinion (7), a volume that argues we cannot expect truth from journalism.

It was also Lippmann who conducted one of the first systematic studies of foreign news in the American press in his long forgotten work entitled "A Test of the News" published in The New Republic in 1920 (8). This remarkable study attempted to assess the accuracy of The New York Times' coverage of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Mincing no words, Lippmann and his co-author, Charles Merz, concluded that the Times coverage was "nothing short of a disaster" (8 , p.42). A reliance on government officials and unreliable unnamed sources, combined with a profound and crass intrusion of the editors' bias, provided information so inaccurate as to poison the wellspring of public opinion, according to Lippmann.

The present research grew out of the UNESCO-sponsored foreign images study conducted in 1978-79 by 20 national teams from the International Association for Mass Communication Research, (IAMCR) (16). A preliminary draft of the IAMCR report suggested several universals about news. Throughout the world, politics is a primary news focus and news of the geographic region of

a particular nation takes priority over foreign dispatches. In addition, the United States and Western Europe were consistent newsmakers throughout the world. News in all media systems deals with exceptional events largely, but particularly is this true when the developing world is portrayed. The report notes: "It's not so much that the developing world is singled out for such 'negative' attention, but that the developing countries tend to be reported only in this manner "(16, p. 117).

Controversy about western press coverage, particularly the American press, of the 21st General Conference of UNESCO at Belgrade in 1980, highlights the need for continued, careful study of world news flow. The UNESCO conference, much like the Paris Peace Conference some 60 years earlier, was not a high moment of press balance and accuracy. This time, however, it was the press' difficulty in covering news in which it was a party -- the consideration of the MacBride Report on world communication problems -- that raised eyebrows.

A. H. Raskin, a former assistant editor of the editorial page of the New York Times and now associate director of the National News Council, studied press coverage of the UNESCO conference. He concluded that the imbalanced reporting of the conference in the American press set a "poor example for Third World journalists . . .on what they should find admirable. . ." in Western journalistic practice (11, p.174). Raskin found that American reporters selected material from the conference that fit Western journalism's "mindset" and that editors at home reinforced the process, by selecting only those articles that portrayed a conflict angle (11, p.173).

That the Belgrade conference should be handled in such a fashion is doubly perplexing in the light of findings from a recent survey of journalists. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman report that at least a slight

majority of 216 "elite" journalists they interviewed were in sympathy with Third World arguments that the U.S. has exploited their economies and resources (5, p.44).

Although charges of imbalance of coverage in the Western mass media seem to have received much of the attention in the world debate on communication problems, some research has taken a close look at the Third World press. Wilbur Schramm studied Asian "prestige" newspapers and four wire services in the Orient. He found that Asian papers were essentially local, reflecting the interests and needs of their audiences. They devoted about three-quarters of their news to their individual countries and showed no greater interest in developmental news than Western mass media (13). Research on newspapers in Kenya and the Ivory Coast by W. A. E. Skurnik found that journalists in these countries were far from the "helpless consumers" of world news that the current rhetoric depicts (15). He argues that national interests, the positions of the Organization of African Unity, and the imagination and initiative of the African journalists were dominant factors in news selection.

These studies suggest that world news flow is a much more complex problem than the initial rhetoric implied. Longitudinal studies that tackle various levels of media systems simultaneously are necessary for untangling some of the complexities and increasing the sophistication of thinking about world news flow.

Purpose of the Study

This study attempts to trace the flow of international news from the Associated Press interbureau (IB blend) and UPI state wires into a random sample of 11 small dailies in Indiana. The work enables us to do two things. First, we can compare patterns of foreign news for the first half of 1981 with the same period in 1979. Second, study of newspaper usage of the wire services

provides evidence about whether the patterns observed in the wire services are similar to those of the small newspapers. Evidence from previous work suggests that the patterns may not be consistent (17).

The AP and UPI news services supply virtually all the foreign news used in small newspapers in America.[1] Although there is no completely typical American state, Indiana newspapers make a good case study for several reasons. Indiana, a heartland state, is both industrial and agricultural. It has 71 daily newspapers, most of which are small to medium in circulation. And the state has been the locale for major sociological case studies, such as the classic research on "Middletown," that attempted to generalize about American life (9).

The major objective of our analysis, then, is to scrutinize the quantity and quality of news about foreign lands available to and used by small- to medium-circulation newspapers in America. A key assumption in our work is that there is a need to increase the size of the attentive public for foreign policy in America and that small newspapers are an important source of international news for readers in small communities.[2]

Research Questions

The major focus of the present research is comparative. The baseline wire service data compiled in our earlier study (18) is compared to similar samples gathered two years later. These specific questions are addressed:

1. What is the comparative frequency of wire service news about nations of the more-developed Northern hemisphere and those of the less-developed Southern hemisphere?

2. Are the two blocs of nations treated differently in subject matter and news themes?

3. Are there differences in news story frequency and/or thematic patterns between wire service and newspaper treatment of the two nation blocs?

4. Focussing on a specific world area, sub-Saharan Africa, what are the differences, if any, in how the national Associated Press trunk wire and the AP interbureau wire handle foreign news?

Methods

This study replicates an earlier content analysis that was based on a coding protocol developed by the UNESCO/IAMCR research group in 1978 (18). Separate measures of conflict news, developed in a doctoral research seminar, and an intensive study of newspaper use of wire news add important new dimensions to the present work.

News sampling. Three samples of news were used. The main sample was selected from the morning cycle of the AP interbureau (IB blend) and the United Press International state news services. The objective was to sample from the supply of foreign news available to those newspapers serving the majority of small cities and towns in America.

AP and UPI news copy that flowed into the computer of the Indiana Daily Student was used as the sampling base. Two types of samples were drawn from the first quarter of 1981 to match similar samples drawn in 1979 for the earlier study (18). Two constructed week samples (two random Mondays, two random Tuesdays, through two random Fridays) and two random weeks of consecutive five-day periods were drawn. All news stories with foreign datelines comprised the foreign news sample.[3]

A second sample of one constructed week of the AP national trunk wire service dispatches filed from sub-Saharan Africa was obtained directly from

the wire service's New York headquarters. The objective was to sample from the supply of foreign news about a single continent that was available to large, prestige mass media and which also served as the initial pool of stories from which the IB blend wire stories would have been chosen by the editors working in the AP's New York bureau.[4]

A random sample of 11 Indiana daily newspapers, circulation less than 39,000, was chosen from the 1981 Editor and Publisher Yearbook (4). Five of the papers were members of the Associated Press and six were clients of the United Press International. The papers were scattered throughout the state and range from the Attica Ledger Tribune (circulation 1,824) to the Bloomington Herald-Telephone (circulation 25,585).[5]

The newspapers were searched for all foreign stories moved by the two wire services on the sampled dates. Using coding criteria developed for the Budd index of news play and display (1), the coders noted the location, length, and extent of editing for each of the wire service stories published in the Indiana newspapers.

The content categories ranged from simple structural characteristics, such as story length, to more complex judgments of story themes and topics. The major categories were news story topics and themes, and the position and nationality of main actors in the news stories. An elaborate measure of conflict attempted to look closely at violent and non-violent conflict themes in the news.

Topics. Coders marked one main topic and as many as three subsidiary topics for each news item. Each story was classified into one of 47 possible subjects, ranging from "politics within states" and "military and defense" to

"human interest" and "natural disasters."

Themes and references. Thirty-two categories of themes were used, with each news story being coded in as many of the categories as indicated by the particular news item. The list of themes and references included such entries as "nuclear arms proliferation/limitation" and "espionage," as well as broader terms such as "capitalism" and "totalitarianism."

Main actor. Principals in each news story were classified into one of 31 types. These classifications ranged from "symbolic/nominal head of state" and "chief executive, prime minister, president," to "ordinary people, citizens."

Conflict Analysis. After coding each story for themes and references, sub-categories of conflict were applied. The classifications ranged from "armed conflict" to "peaceful demonstrations."[6]

Advanced doctoral students in a research methods class processed samples of ten news stories. Average coder agreement on the news story topics was 68 percent. A post-coding test of an "expert" coder against a random sample of the coded material produced a Scott's Pi reliability score of .65 (chance agreement is removed) and a 70 percent agreement score on selection of news story topic (14).[7]

North-South Blocs. In order to compare the amount and kind of news coverage of more developed and less developed countries of the world and to facilitate replication of our earlier study (18), the countries of the world were divided into two blocs. The classification, a difficult and problematic task because of the complicated nature of political and economic development, was based primarily upon a North-South geographical dimension. The categorization follows the logic of the two North-South conferences on international economic cooperation in Paris (1975) and Cancún, Mexico (1981), with the more developed countries tending to fall into the Northern Hemisphere and the less developed nations falling into the Southern Hemisphere.

Europe, the U.S.S.R., North America, and South Africa make up the bulk of the more developed North. Japan and Australia were members of the North group at the Paris and Cancún conferences, so they are included in that bloc. South Africa and Greece are also classified as more developed countries because of their ties to the Western world.

Africa (minus South Africa), Asia (minus the eastern U.S.S.R.), South America, and Oceania (minus Australia) make up the major portion of the South bloc. Yugoslavia was also included in this group because of its leading role in the New Information Order debate and in the Non-Aligned Nations Movement, and its membership in the South group at the Paris and Cancún meetings.

Other arguable cases -- particularly Turkey, Israel, Hong Kong, and Portugal -- were classified on the basis of their stance on the World Information Order debate. Of the four, only Portugal was classified as a more developed country. Israel was classified as a less developed country because of its comparative newness and it dependence upon Western military and economic aid.

Findings

With a few significant exceptions, small newspaper use of foreign news is symmetrical with the material sent by the news services. Although only one wire story in four was actually used by one or more of the newspapers studied, the proportions of topics, themes, and coverage devoted to the two world areas roughly reflect the proportions delivered by the news services. In the detailed look at the findings that follows, attention will be given first to the news services, with the newspaper treatment of wire foreign news following.

The two news services are strikingly similar in the proportions of news

stories moved in 1981 from the North and South nation blocs. No significant differences in frequency of coverage of the two blocs emerged from the analysis, although the more developed North received a little more than half of the news items in the sample. There was virtually no difference in news story length in the news from the two blocs. These findings are in contrast to those in our study of two years ago in which the less developed nations received significantly more coverage as a bloc (and in longer stories) than did the more developed group of North nations. (See Table 1.)

Table 1 About Here

No consistent difference in the frequency of use and the page or section location of foreign dispatches occurred between items datelined from North or South nations in the small daily newspapers. Seven of the sampled papers used slightly more news from the less developed world than from the more developed nations of the Northern hemisphere. Six of the papers gave slightly better news story position to North nations.

Of course, the less developed countries in our study outnumber the more developed countries nearly three to one. So the relative parity of coverage found here is only for the two blocs, with individual nations of the North receiving far greater coverage than individual South nations.

Comparison of the subject matter of stories, based on main and subsidiary topics combined, revealed interesting similarities as well differences between treatment of the more developed and less developed countries. The bulk of the AP interbureau wire and the UPI state service coverage for both North and South nations was about diplomatic/political relations,internal and armed conflict, political crime, terrorism, and human interest stories. The wire services concentrated mostly on "official" news -- that which flows mainly from government

and military sources. Little wire service news dealt with social problems, culture, education, health, family planning and other social services, or with international aid and economic matters, especially agricultural projects. (See Table 2.)

Table 2 About Here

However, several important shifts appear in the 1981 coverage. Agricultural, entertainment, and cultural arts matters were covered -- primarily in the more-developed countries -- in the recent sample. The coverage was less than 5 percent in all cases, but suggests a possible growing journalistic sensitivity to areas that critics have highlighted. In addition, in 1981 the less-developed nations were covered in human interest stories about as frequently as the North bloc countries, whereas in 1979 the more-developed countries received nearly five times as much human interest coverage as did the less-developed nations.

The extent of conflict coverage of the less-developed nations, although still heavy in the 1981 sample, appears to have been less than in the 1979 study. Dispatches containing reference to internal conflict or crisis were roughly equal for the two blocs in 1981, with the number of such stories having dramatically increased for the industrial bloc and significantly decreased for the less-developed nations. Stories about armed conflict still were much more likely to be datelined from the less-developed bloc, but the number of those stories was considerably fewer from the less-developed South in 1981 than in 1979.

About 60 percent of all wire stories from foreign lands contained some form of conflict, with a third of all dispatches dealing with violent conflict. (See Table 3.) Third World countries were twice as likely as North nations to be portrayed in stories about violent conflicts. About one story in four contained mention of a fatality, with Third World dispatches twice as likely as North nation items to contain a death.

Table 3 About Here

Roughly half of all foreign news in the wire service sample contained explicit U.S. involvement, but Third World news was significantly more likely to contain description of U.S. involvement with the news subject than was other foreign news. (See Table 4.)

Table 4 About Here

The wire service tendency to give more frequent coverage to conflict news about developing nations was enhanced by even greater proportionate use (See Table 5)
of such dispatches in the newspapers. / South countries were three times more likely to be the source of newspaper stories containing accounts of violent (See Table 6)
conflict than were North nations. / Indiana newspaper accounts noting a fatality were five times more likely to occur in a developing nation than in one of the North countries.

Although conflict, particularly violent conflict and news of fatalities, is clearly an exception, the major point is the proportional similarity that exists between what the wire services provided and what the newspapers use. Human interest (oddity) and other news categories appear to follow roughly the proportions contained in the wires, with little significant disparity between treatment of the North and South nations in the newspapers.

Tables 5 and 6 About Here

A close look at some indicators of news story quality -- the presence of background information, for example -- suggested no apparent differences in the dispatches from North and South nations. A majority of the wire items contained some background of the news event, with only one item in four limited to flat description of an event.[8] However, more than 70 percent of the wire dispatches were edited, usually cut in length, by the newspapers when they were published. This propensity to shorten foreign news items may be a factor in the newspaper preference for conflict stories, particularly those containing violent conflict. Such items tend to be shorter in the original wire copy, making editing less likely to be needed for these stories to fit into limited newspaper space for foreign news.

In general, then, the present analysis suggests that wire news coverage of the North and South hemispheres is roughly balanced in frequency. The shift from greater coverage of the less developed nations in the 1979 wire service sample to slightly more coverage of the more developed North nations in the 1981 sample suggests the push and pull of events is a major factor in world news coverage, with episodes of violent conflict being particularly newsworthy. The attention paid to various subjects of news from year to year -- diplomatic/political activity or armed conflict and crisis, for example -- seems to be comparable in the two time frames, with the newspapers using far fewer foreign news stories than the wires provide, but roughly in the same proportions as those in the wire. In other words, the wire services tend to have a powerful agenda-setting effect on the subject matter of foreign news coverage in various Indiana newspapers.

Focus on Africa

To provide a more in-depth look at the nature of foreign news flow, an intensive analysis of a single world region was undertaken. A random sample of one "constructed week" of five days from the Associated Press national trunk wire stories filed from sub-Saharan Africa during the first quarter of 1981 was compared with the interbureau wire sample and the Africa stories used by the AP members of the Indiana newspaper sample. The AP trunk wire is a major supplier of news to large media in the U.S. The AP interbureau (IB blend) service dealt with earlier in the paper reaches smaller media such as the Indiana newspaper sample, so the comparison will be suggestive of Africa's comparative image at various levels of the foreign news flow process.

Forty-four Africa dispatches were filed on the national trunk wire during the sampled days, with the average item about 40 percent longer than the 18 IB blend wire dispatches from the continent. Eleven African nations served as datelines for the national trunk wire, with half of the dispatches reporting on subjects from South Africa and Zimbabwe. The IB wire covered six nations and also concentrated on South Africa and Zimbabwe. Sub-Saharan Africa was virtually ignored by the Indiana newspapers studied during this period, with South Africa obtaining the only newspaper coverage. (See Figure 1)

Figure 1 About Here

State and diplomatic relations, internal conflict, racialism, and political independence made up the bulk of subjects and themes in both the AP trunk and IB wire services. The trunk service, however, contained a rich and varied range of material, with economic self-sufficiency, development, and developmental aid receiving considerable attention. Dispatches reporting violent conflict were twice

as likely to appear in the regional wire news about Africa than in trunk news, with -- not unexpectedly -- much less diversity of subject matter also apparent in the regional wire.

Leaders in governmental executive branches, military spokesmen, and terrorists were the most frequently cited news sources in both wires from the sub-Saharan African region. A majority of the Africa dispatches in both AP wires went beyond event description to provide some story context and background, although the significantly shorter stories in the IB service were less likely to contain dispatches with general contextual information than were the stories on the national trunk wire.

Conclusions

This study has built on our earlier baseline work to begin accumulating a long-term perspective on wire service coverage of foreign lands. In addition, we have added a look at small newspapers, the end of the news pipeline. The results are, of course, varied and somewhat complex. But some striking conclusions are suggested.

First, the frequency of coverage of major world hemispheres of geo-political-economic similarity -- in this case, North and South divisions of more and less developed nations -- appears to shift from year to year, with relative parity of coverage likely over the long term. News from "official" sources of government and military dominate news from all world areas. The major disparity of coverage occurs in the realm of conflict, with Third World regions painted much more frequently in dispatches about violent conflict, crisis, and fatal events of one kind or another.

The changes in the world news portrayal as one moves from the major pipeline of the national trunk wire for large media to the services for small media and

then the foreign news actually used by those media, are really quite dramatic. One begins with a relatively rich mixture of news -- even including news that may be classified as development coverage -- and ends with a very scanty, violence and conflict-laced portrait of the world in smaller newspapers. This pattern is especially acute for the Third World, where the IB wire enhances a view of Third World violence that is even further accentuated by smaller newspapers.

On the positive side, the news provided by the wires provides a higher proportion of stories with contextual material than might be expected. About three quarters of the wire stories contained some analysis beyond the news "event," with the less developed and more developed blocs being treated similarly by the wires. On the other hand, the newspapers we studied usually shorten the stories, thus likely trimming the contextual material to save newshole for local material.

Finally, although our data do not support the claim that the less developed areas of the world are neglected in favor of the more developed countries in the foreign news flowing to the United States, our findings do suggest an intensifying focus on Third World violent conflict and crisis as one moves down the news "funnel." Some will argue, perhaps rightly, that peace is actually unusual everywhere in the world, and that this is particularly true in the Third World. To ignore the conflict would, then, be irresponsible. John MacDonald, foreign editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal, argues that news is fundamentally about social change, and social change usually involves conflict (10).

There is truth in these arguments, of course. And, there is some evidence in the 1981 sample that the frequency of conflict coverage of the less-developed nations was less than in the earlier 1979 data. Even so, this study suggests that the top of the foreign news funnel -- the AP national trunk wire in this case -- contains considerably less conflict, proportionally, than do the regional

wires and, ultimately, the small newspapers we have looked at. This suggests that more attention is needed from professional journalists and scholars alike to find ways of increasing the flow of a greater variety of foreign news into the hands of the American small newspaper reader, if these smaller papers are going to contribute to increasing the international understanding of their readers.

Footnotes

[1]Dave Swearingen, Indianapolis Associated Press Bureau Chief, informed the authors during a meeting of the Indiana AP Managing Editors in May 1981 that a recent AP inquiry showed that more than 70 percent of the approximately 1,300 newspapers that AP members rely on the IB wire as their "prime" source of news. Prestige and large-circulation papers, such as the Indianapolis and Evansville papers, also receive the "A" trunk wire, the sports wire, and the business wire. In a telephone interview with Dustin Harvey, Indianapolis United Press International Bureau Chief on April 16, 1979, the UPI state wire was described as the "minimum" service from UPI, designated for small, afternoon newspapers. Harvey estimated that about half of the UPI subscribers rely only on the state wire, typically the smaller papers.

[2]Ruth Clark's focus group study of three Midwestern small circulation newspapers (2) found that local news was the "lifeblood" of small papers, but she also discovered that the small newspapers were expected to be "real" newspapers with international news to explain what was seen on the network TV newscasts. Analysis of the circulation patterns of some of the small newspapers in our sample suggests that substantial portions of the readers of these papers are not likely to be subscribers to large metropolitan newspapers. In the case of the Peru (Ind.) Tribune, published in Miami County in north central Indiana, The Indianapolis Star, the major metropolitan daily circulating in the area, reaches only 8 percent of the county households; the Tribune reaches 63 percent of the households.

[3]Sampled dates are these: Wednesday, Jan. 14; Thursday, Jan. 22; Friday, Jan. 23; Tuesday, Jan. 27; Wednesday, Jan. 28; Thursday, Jan. 29; Monday, Feb. 2; Tuesday, Feb. 3; Tuesday, Feb. 10; Wednesday, Feb. 11; Monday, Feb. 23; Friday, Feb. 27; Thursday, Mar. 5; Monday, Mar. 9; Tuesday, Mar. 10; Wednesday, Mar. 11;

Thursday, March. 12; Friday, Mar. 13; Monday, Apr. 13; and Friday, Apr. 17. Computer problems caused several substitutions during the continuous week periods.

[4]Sampled dates are these: Thursday, Jan. 29; Monday, Feb. 9; Tuesday, Feb. 10; Saturday, Feb. 28; Monday, March 23; Sunday, April 5, and Wednesday, April 29, 1981. The sample was obtained through the courtesy and assistance of Stanley M. Swinton, vice president and director of AP's World Services Division, and George A. Krimsky, deputy news editor, AP World Services Division, New York, N.Y.

[5]Sampled Indiana newspapers are these: (1) Attica Ledger Tribune (1,824 circ., AP); (2) Bicknell Knox County News (2,960 circ., UPI); (3) Bloomington Herald-Telephone (25,585 circ., UPI); (4) Clinton The Daily Clintonian (5,119 circ., UPI); (5) Columbus The Republic (21,991 circ., UPI); (6) Columbia City Post (5,915 circ., UPI); (7) Connersville News-Examiner (7,963 circ., AP); (8) Goshen News (14,039 circ., AP); (9) Peru Tribune (9,363 circ., AP); (10) Plymouth Pilot-News (9,378 circ., AP); and (11) Wabash Plain Dealer (8,472 circ., AP).

[6]This measure was developed in a doctoral methods seminar (J651) taught by C. Wilhoit in the spring of 1981. Primarily responsible for developing and testing the measure were Sharon Bramlett, Pegie Stark, and Pat Washburn. As applied to the present study, the measure contained three categories, with each news item being classified in only one: 1) violent conflict (use of physical force in a situation of disagreement or controversy); 2) non-violent conflict (a situation of active group or individual conflict or controversy that extended beyond expression of opinion but not to the point of use of physical force); and 3) non-conflict (situations in which no conflict was discernible). An example of violent conflict is an AP dispatch of Feb. 23, 1981: "Peruvian and Equadorian soldiers battled in the jungle-clad mountains between their countries

over the weekend and sealed all border crossings Sunday. . . ." A non-violent conflict item from AP on Jan. 29 read: "At least seven factories shut down in southeast Poland today in answer to a call for a general strike. Meanwhile, a Politburo member stepped up attacks on militant unionists. . . ." This item was classified as non-conflict: "London (UPI) -- The Times and its associated London Publications have been sold in principle to the News International organization headed by Australian press magnate Rupert Murdock. . . ." Coder reliability tests from three pairings of doctoral students -- Bramlett, Stark, and Washburn -- yielded 90%, 70%, and 60% agreement. A coder reliability matrix of 36 pairings of the nine J651 class members showed a median agreement of 60%. The test contained 10 wire dispatches selected as extremely difficult items.

[7]Nine doctoral students in an advanced methods course (J651) coded half the news stories during spring 1981. The remainder of the news items were coded during the summer by two doctoral students, both of whom had extensive experience with the coding protocol, and an M.A. student in English.

[8]This measure was developed in the doctoral methods seminar (J651) by Judith Buddenbaum, Gordon Jackson, and Mary Alice Sentman. As applied to the present study, the measure contained two categories, with each news item being classified in only one: 1) Event only reported -- An account of a "hard news" situation that is factual and time-specific, such as a change of government, release of an official report, the results of a soccer game or a fire, as examples; and 2) Event with analysis/background -- Interpretation, explanation, or commentary of at least a paragraph in length that elaborates on the relationship of an event to other events or developments. For example, an item about a strike by Poland's Solidarity movement would be classified as analysis if the item explained that the strike had followed a string of other strikes that were directed at described goals. A coder reliability matrix of 36 pairings

of the nine J651 class members showed a median agreement of 80% on a set of 10 news stories chosen as extremely difficult items.

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Table 1

Number of Stories from U.S. Regional Wire Services
on Less Developed and More Developed Nations
in 1979 and 1981

	1979		1981	
	Less Developed	More Developed	Less Developed	More Developed
AP	107(54%)	91(46%)	84(46%)	97(54%)
UPI	90(65%)	48(35%)	42(44%)	53(56%)
TOTAL	197(59%)	139(41%)	126(46%)	150(54%)
	corrected chi-square = 3.71, 1df, p = .05		corrected chi-square = .049, 1df, p = .82	

Table 2

Comparison of Subject Matter of U.S. Regional Wire Service Foreign Coverage--Spring 1979 and Spring 1981

Topics of Wire Service Stories	Percent of Stories From More-Developed Countries[a]		Percent of Stories From Less-Developed Countries		Percent of All Stories in Total Sample		Chi-square Significance Between More- and Less-Developed Countries	
	1979 (n = 139)	1981 (n = 150)	1979 (n = 197)	1981 (n = 127)	1979 (n = 336)	1981 (n = 277)	1979	1981
Politics								
1. Diplomatic/political activity between states	34.5%	29.3%	48.3%	35.4%	42.6%	32.1%	.004	.55
2. Internal conflict or crisis	13.7	26.7	46.7	28.3	33.0	27.4	.0001	.27
3. Elections, campaigns, appointments, government changes	15.1	3.3	10.1	3.1	12.2	3.2	.27	.95
4. Other political, including legislation	1.4	2.7	3.0	3.9	2.4	3.2	.45	.54
Military and Defense								
5. Armed conflict or threat of	10.8	11.3	41.6	32.3	28.9	20.9	.0001	.0000
6. Peace moves, negotiations, settlements	10.8	6.0	17.3	8.9	14.6	6.9	.11	.72
7. Other, including arms deals, weapons, bases, exercises	4.3	4.7	2.5	3.1	3.3	4.0	.59	.69
Economic Matters								
8. Agreements on trade, tariffs, etc.	3.6	1.3	3.5	.8	3.6	1.1	.25	.24
9. Other international trade, imports, exports	4.3	1.3	2.5	0.0	3.3	.7	.21	.55
10. Capital investment, stock issues (not aid)	0.7	.7	0.0	.8	0.3	.7	.86	.36

Table 2 (continued)

Topics of Wire Service Stories	Percent of Stories From More-Developed Countries[a]		Percent of Stories From Less-Developed Countries		Percent of All Stories in Total Sample		Chi-square Significance Between More- and Less-Developed Countries	
	1979 (n = 139)	1981 (n = 150)	1979 (n =197)	1981 (n = 127)	1979 (n = 336)	1981 (n = 277)	1979	1981
Economic Matters (contd.)								
11. Stock exchange, share prices, dividends	0.0%	.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	.4%	N/A	.93
12. Other economics performance, output, growth, etc.	2.2	2.7	0.5	0.0	1.2	1.4	.39	.18
13. Prices, cost of living, inflation, etc.	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.0	0.9	.7	.68	.55
14. Industrial projects, factories, dams, ports	4.4	2.7	1.5	.8	2.7	1.8	.11	.46
15. Agricultural matters, projects,crops, harvests, etc.	0.0	4.0	0.5	0.0	0.3	2.2	.86	.06
16. Industrial/labor relations, disputes, negotiations, wages	3.6	14.0	1.0	0.0	2.1%	8.6	.11	.0001
17. Monetary questions, exchange rates, money supply	3.6	4.3	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.7	.03	.12
18. Other economic	0.0	2.7	2.0	1.6	1.2	2.2	.24	.8
International Aid								
19. Disaster or famine relief	0.0	1.3	2.5	.8	1.5	1.1	.17	.65
20. Aid for economic purposes (e.g., industrial development)	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.6	1.2	1.4	.87	.99
21. Military aid, weapons, advisors, training	0.7	5.3	7.1	1.6	4.5	3.6	.01	.23
22. Other aid (e.g. education, family planning)	0.7	.7	0.5	.8	0.6	.7	.64	.36
Social Services								
23. Social problems generally (health, housing, illiteracy, etc.)	3.6	2.7	1.5	.8	2.4	1.8	.36	.38

Table 2 (continued)

Topics of Wire Service Stories	Percent of Stories From More-Developed Countries[a] 1979 (n = 139)	1981 (n = 150)	Percent of Stories From Less-Developed Countries 1979 (n = 197)	1981 (n = 127)	Percent of All Stories in Total Sample 1979 9n = 336)	1981 (n = 277)	Chi-square Significance Between More- and Less-Developed Countries 1979	1981
Social Services (contd.)								
24. Educational provision	0.0%	1.3%	0.5%	.8%	0.3%	1.1%	.86	.88
25. Health provision (not family planning)	0.7	.7	0.0	0.0	0.3	.4	.86	.93
26. Family planning	0.0	.3	0.0	.8	0.0	1.1	N/A	.24
27. Other social services and social welfare	0.0	2.0	0.5	0.0	0.3	1.1	.86	.28
Crime, Police, Judicial, Legal, Penal								
28. Non-political crime, police, judicial, and penal activity	14.4	8.0	3.6	4.7	8.1	6.5	.0001	.33
29. Political crime	9.4	12.7	17.8	22.8	14.2	17.3	.02	.08
30. Non-criminal legal and court proceedings (e.g., claims for damages)	0.0	1.3	0.5	0.0	0.3	.7	.86	.43
31. Other crime/legal	2.9	2.7	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.4	.06	.18
32. Culture, Arts, Archaeology	5.7	4.7	3.0	1.6	3.2	4.2	.29	.06
33. Religion[b]	10.8	9.1	1.0	.8	5.1	5.1	.0001	.04
34. Scientific, Technical, Medical	7.9	2.7	3.0	3.1	5.1	2.9	.12	.74
Sports								
35. International	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	N/A	.28
36. Non-international	0.0	.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	.4	N/A	.93
37. Entertainment, Show Business (except personalities)	0.7	4.0	1.0	0.0	0.9	2.2	.68	.08

Table 2 (continued)

Topics of Wire Service Stories	Percent of Stories From More-Developed Countries[a]		Percent of Stories From Less-Developed Countries		Percent of All Stories in Total Sample		Chi-square Significance Between More- and less Developed Countries	
Personalities (not politicians)	1979 (n = 139)	1981 (n = 150)	1979 (n = 197)	1981 (n = 127)	1979 (n = 336)	1981 (n = 227)	1979	1981
38. Sports	1.4%	.7%	1.0%	0.0%	1.2%	.4%	.47	.93
39. Entertainers	0.0	4	1.0	0.0	0.6	2.2	.49	.07
40. Others	0.7	1.3	2.0	0.0	1.5	.7	.47	.55
41. Human Interest, Odd Happenings, Animals, Sex, etc.	22.3	19.3	4.5	15.4	11.9	16.6	.0001	.353
42. Student Matters	0.7	1.3	2.0	0.0	1.5	.7	.56	.43
Ecology								
43. Energy conservation	1.4	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.9	0.0	.48	N/A
44. Pollution	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
45. Other	0.7	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.3	1.1	.86	.19
46. Natural Disaster (floods, etc.)	2.2	2	3.6	2.4	3.0	2.2	.68	.84
47. Other	4.3	3.3	2.0	7.9	3.0	5.4	.42	.07

[a]These percentages for stories about more-developed countries (and the percentages for stories about less-developed countries and for all stories combined) total to more than 100% because each story was coded into one main topic and up to three subsidiary topics. The percentages in this table are based on the combined main and subsidiary topic tables.

[b]These percentages for the "religion" topic are based only on the main topic totals. Including the subsidiary topic totals would obscure the difference between the wire service coverage of the more-developed and less-developed countries.

Table 3

Comparison of Regional Wire Service Stories
Dealing with Conflict From Less Developed and More Developed Nations
in Spring 1981

	Violent Conflict	Non-violent Conflict	Non-Conflict	TOTAL
More Developed	34(23%)	48(32%)	68(45%)	150(100%)
Less Developed	61(48%)	27(21%)	38(30%)	126(100%)
Total	95(34%)	75(27%)	106(38%)	276(100%)

Corrected chi square = 20.11, 2df, p = .0000

Table 4

Comparison of Regional Wire Service Stories
Containing Reference to U.S. Involvement
in Less Developed and More Developed Nations

	U.S. Involvement	No Involvement	Total
More Developed	61(42%)	86(59%)	147 (100%)
Less Developed	69(55%)	56(45%)	125 (100%)
Total	130 (48%)	142(52%)	272 (100%)

Corrected chi-square = 4.55, 1df, p = .0329

Table 5

Comparison of the Number of Regional Wire Stories Available and the Use of Armed Conflict Stories by Indiana Newspapers

	Wire Stories On Armed Conflict	Stories Used In Newspapers
From More Developed Countries	17	2(12%)
From Less Developed Countries	41	16(39%)

Table 6

Comparison of Indiana Newspaper Use of Wire Stories
Dealing with Conflict From Less Developed and More Developed Nations
in Spring 1981

	Violent Conflict	Non-violent Conflict	Non-Conflict	TOTAL
More Developed	7(18%)	16(42%)	15(40%)	38(100%)
Less Developed	23(59%)	6(15%)	10(26%)	39(100%)

Chi-square = 14.07, 2df, p = .00

Figure 1

Comparative News "Maps" of Sub-Saharan Africa